

Literary Gaming

Course Pack

Developed by:

**Katie Shanahan and
Sereena Hamm**

Introduction

Learning through video games teaches students to think systematically, persist through challenges and failure, take calculated risks and vary their performance based on feedback (Gee 2005). Video games also tell compelling interactive stories and use sophisticated storytelling techniques to communicate a wide range of emotions and experiences to the audience. Because students are familiar with video games and range from casual to frequent players outside the classroom, using video games to enhance content instruction can engage students in learning in new ways. Playing video games is not the only valuable experience for students. When students are able to design their own games, they gain the ability to apply abstract concepts to real world experiences and problems, a skill transferable across content areas and in future careers. Additionally, “Designing games builds Systems Thinking, 21st Century Skills, Creative Problem Solving, Art and Aesthetics, Writing and Storytelling, and creates a motivation for STEM learning” [sic] (gamestarmechanic.com). As students learn to use tools to build a video game that challenges their peers, they develop computational thinking and creativity as they create logical rules and goals while also designing aesthetically pleasing settings and stories for their quests.

This unit plan contains the materials used for a pilot of a new 7th grade English unit at Terrapin Middle School. The unit, a culminating experience for the 7th grade Imagination and Storytelling, guides students through the process of designing their own video game using the tools provided at Gamestar Mechanic (gamestarmechanic.com). Gamestar Mechanic, an award-winning game design platform for children ages 7-14, teaches students to think apply the problem solving and systematic thinking strategies of professional game designers by allowing them to play and edit games in “quest” levels that teach them about the essential game design principles of space, components, mechanics, rules, and goals. Once students have learned about game design by playing the quest, they are prepared to design their own games.

Perhaps this sounds like a daunting task, but no programming ability is needed for Gamestar Mechanic, so we think it serves as a tool to teach critical thinking that most teachers will be able to learn quickly and can use to guide students through the process of creating challenging, but fun games for their peers. The unit is divided into three phases to help students ensure that they are able to publish high-quality games with engaging stories. First, students prepare to design games by analyzing the stories of video games for literary techniques and storytelling strategies. Then, students play the quest levels of Gamestar Mechanic to learn how to build games. Finally, students plan and design their games. To ensure the quality of their final products, students play-test their games and receive peer feedback in order to revise their games before their final submissions.

This plan includes the needed documentation, materials, and notes for future TMS teachers or teachers in other communities to conduct this unit, including lesson plans, materials and worksheets, models of student work, and assessment tools.

Standards

Common Core - English Language Arts Standards - Reading- Grade 7

RL.7.1. Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL.7.2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

RL.7.3. Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

Common Core - English Language Arts Standards - Writing - Grade 7

W.7.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

- Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
- Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
- Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
- Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.
- Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

W.7.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

- Apply grade 7 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history”).

Standards for the 21st Century Learner

2. Draw conclusions, make informed decisions, apply knowledge to new situations, and create new knowledge.

- 2.1.5 Collaborate with others to exchange ideas, develop new understandings, make decisions and solve problems.
- 2.1.6 Use the writing process, media and visual literacy, and technology skills to create products that express new understandings. (Skill)

4. Pursue personal and aesthetic growth.

- 4.1.8 Use creative and artistic formats to express personal learning. (Skill)

Maryland Technology Literacy Standards for Students - Grade 7

Standard 3: Learning - Select and use technology tools to enhance learning

- a) Use technology tools, including software and hardware, to learn new content or reinforce skills
- b) Defend the selection of a specific technology tool to complete a learning task

Video Game Design Challenge

You've played video games, analyzed their creation, and learned the principles of video game design. You've moved from apprentice mechanic to master craftsman.

Now, you have been hired to design the hottest new game on Gamestar Mechanic for teens 7-14. Your game will need to have a compelling story to keep your audience hooked and your sales high.

Can you
rise to the
challenge?

Design Specifications:

- You must submit a storyboard before beginning to create your game.
- Your game must have at least three levels to be considered for grading.
- Your game should include storytelling techniques to make the game compelling.
- You must play all levels of your game before publishing.
- You must play and review the games of three classmates (assigned to you in the final stages of the project).
- You must revise your game based on feedback from your classmates.

Required
storytelling
techniques
include: mood,
character,
setting,
conflict,
resolution,
point of view,
and pacing.

Design Process:

1. Storyboard your game and submit it for approval.
2. Design your game.
3. Play your game.
4. Once your game is functional, publish your game.
5. Play the games of 3 classmates while they are playing yours.
6. Give feedback to your classmates.
7. Revise game.
8. Submit game for a grade.

Assignments will
be completed in class
and at home, with
smaller deadlines to
be given in class and
added to your
planner.

Deadline: Monday, June 11, 2012

Evaluation: You will be graded based on the attached
rubric.

Video Game Design Challenge Rubric

	A (9-10 point)	B (8-9 point)	C (7-8 point)	D/F (below 7 point)
Storyline ____/ 10	Game plot contains a compelling and unique storyline with an exciting conflict and resolution.	Game plot contains a storyline with a clear conflict and resolution.	Game plot contains a storyline, but it may be incomplete or unclear in places.	Game plot contains an unclear storyline or does not contain a storyline.
Mechanics ____/ 10	Game mechanics are fun, but challenging, using sprites, goals and rules in a unique way for innovative game play.	Game mechanics are fun and adequately challenging and sprite, goal, and rule use is acceptable.	Game mechanics are confusing or weak in a few areas of sprite, goal or rule use. Overall, game is still fun and playable.	Game mechanics in sprite, goal, or rule use is confusing in many areas. Overall game playability is impacted.
Setting and Space <i>Tools: background and sprites</i> ____/ 10	Setting of the game are detailed and create a challenging game space that also sophisticatedly contributes to storytelling.	Setting of the game creates a playable game space that contributes to storytelling.	Setting of the game contributes to the story, but may be too crowded or too open at times for game play.	Setting of the game is confusing, crowded, or unconnected to the story, or game does not use sprites and background to create a setting.
Game Description <i>Tools: goals, rules, win/ lose messages</i> ____/ 10	Tells an intriguing story and uses the game description tools to contribute to both gameplay and storytelling.	Tells a story and uses the game description tools to contribute to either gameplay or storytelling.	Tells a story, but use of one or more game descriptions tools is unclear or does not contribute to gameplay or storytelling.	Unclear use of game description tools or failure to use game description tools.

	A (9-10 point)	B (8-9 point)	C (7-8 point)	D/F (below 7 point)
Pacing _____/ 10	Levels progress appropriately in challenge level and tell a story in a way that progresses naturally and evenly.	Levels progress in challenge level and tell a story in a logical order.	Levels may not progress evenly in challenge level and/ or story progresses in an unclear rather than logical way.	Story pacing is uneven or absent.
Mood _____/ 10	Subtle and sophisticated mood for the game is communicated using game tools including background, avatar, sprites, music, etc.	Mood for the game is communicated using more than one game tool.	Game communicates a mood using at least one game tool.	Game does not communicate a clear mood.
Characterization _____/ 10	Characters are developed and have clear personality and consistent roles communicated using game tools.	Characters are identified and have consistent roles communicated using game tools.	Characters are identified but may be unclear or inconsistent in places.	Avatars in games are not connected to the story or their connection to the story is unclear.
Point of view _____/ 10	Point of view is consistent and contributes to the telling of the story.	Point of view is consistent.	Point of view may be inconsistent (shifting between narration or game perspective)	No clear point of view is chosen.
Feedback _____/ 10	Provides constructive, specific and meaningful feedback about peer games	Provides constructive and sufficient feedback on peer games.	Provides feedback about peer games. Feedback may be unclear or minimal in places.	Provides consistently minimal feedback about peer games or does not provide feedback about peer games.
Revision (Iteration) _____/ 10	Takes into account peer feedback and revises game in meaningful ways based on feedback.	Makes adequate changes to game based on peer feedback.	Makes changes to game but changes may not fully address peer feedback.	Makes few or no changes to game after receiving feedback, despite peer concerns.
Total				/ 100 points

Dear 7th grade parent or guardian,

In order to promote 21st century skills in the classroom, the 7th grade English class has the opportunity to use Gamestar Mechanic (gamestarmechanic.com) in our final storytelling unit. Gamestar Mechanic, an award-winning game design platform for children ages 7-14, teaches students to think like video game designers by allowing them to play and edit games in “quest” levels that teach them about the essential game design principles of space, components, mechanics, rules, and goals. Learning through video games teaches students to think systematically, persist through challenges and failure, take calculated risks and vary their performance based on feedback (Gee 2005). In the classroom, we will use Gamestar Mechanic to meet educational goals relevant to our study of storytelling. As a class, we will:

- Define vocabulary relevant to game design
- Analyze video games for narrative elements including mood, characterization, setting, conflict, resolution, cause-effect, point of view, pacing, and visual transitions.
- Identify and use the tools game designers use to tell stories (backgrounds, cutscenes, music, characters, level descriptions, intro screens, outro screens).
- Compare and contrast video game narratives to print narratives.
- Write engaging narratives and support them with relevant visual storytelling.

These classroom activities align with Common Core Standards, AASL Standards for the 21st Century Learner, and Maryland Technology Standards.

In order to maintain student privacy and safety, students will receive a secure link to login to gamestarmechanic.com from their teacher, and upon registration will be added to the classroom account. Students will not need to provide email addresses to the site in order to register. While the tool has social networking features, these will be disabled in our classroom account. Please see the attached privacy policy for a more detailed explanation of privacy on the site.

You and your child are required to review the privacy policy and for Gamestar Mechanic and sign the attached permission slip to provide consent to participate in the unit. Please review the above information and permission slip below, and feel free to contact either Ms. Hamm or Ms. Shanahan with any additional questions about the wiki project. We look forward to working with your child on this collaborative learning experience.

Best,

Sereena Hamm
7th grade English Teacher
shamm1@umd.edu

Katie Shanahan
Middle School Librarian
kmshana@umd.edu

Please review the below permission slip and return no later than May 23, 2011.

We have reviewed Gamestar Mechanic's privacy policy and consent to
_____ (student name) participating in the unit.

Parent/ Guardian Signature:

Student Signature:

Thank you for your support of our unit. -- Ms. Hamm and Ms. Shanahan



Gamestar Mechanic Privacy Policy

Gamestar Mechanic ("Gamestar" or the "site") is an online service offered by E-Line Media ("we" or "us") that allows users to play, design and share online games. This policy covers how we treat the information we collect and receive from you. Our goal is to create a safe, entertaining and educational online environment that complies with the United States Federal Trade Commission's Children's Online Privacy Protection Rule.

This Privacy Policy is effective as of November 1, 2011. In the future, our site or our practices may change. When we make changes related to privacy, we will revise this Privacy Policy to reflect the changes. We'll post the updated version here, and we'll notify you if we think the changes will significantly impact the treatment of information you have already provided.

This Privacy Policy applies to the version of Gamestar Mechanic that is open to registration and use by members of the general public. We also make private "realms" of the service available to certain organizations or groups, and it is the responsibility of those organizations or groups to inform their users if their own privacy policies differ from this one. Users within these realms should contact their Realm Administrator for more information.

Information we collect

Information you provide to us

When you register for a Gamestar Mechanic account, we do not require that you provide us with any personal information such as a real name, address, email address or telephone number.

When you register, we ask for and store your birthdate in order to determine your eligibility to use certain age-restricted features of the site, specifically Social Media and Networking Features. We may also use your birthdate for the purpose of sending you a special gift on your birthday. Aside from these circumstances, we will not use your birthdate for any other purposes, including promotional purposes.

If you are thirteen (13) years old or older, you may also optionally provide us with an email address. If you choose to provide us with an email address, we will use it only to contact you to provide customer service. You also have the option of allowing us to use this email address to contact you regarding Gamestar Mechanic features, contests and promotions. If you are registering for a Premium Account or registering to use Gamestar Mechanic as an Educator, we require that you supply us with the email address of a person age eighteen or older. We will only use email addresses we collect for communication directly related to Gamestar Mechanic, and every email we send will have clear opt-out instructions. Furthermore, we will never share these email addresses with any third party.

If we do not have an email address on file for your user account (either because you are under the age of thirteen or have chosen not to provide us with one), you will also have the option of providing us with an email address in the event you initiate a support request. If you provide us with an email address in this situation, we will only use it to contact you with regard to your support request and will remove it from our system once the support request has been completed.

Gamestar Mechanic account holders can view the personal information they have provided to us any time they are logged into their account by going to their profile page. At any time, you may request that your personal information be removed from our system and your account be disabled, either from your profile page or by sending a request to support@gamestarmechanic.com. If you make such a request, we will disable your account and remove the personal information from our system so that it cannot be used in the future.

Information we track

When you visit the site and use different features of Gamestar, our automated software and tools routinely collect information for internal purposes, as described below, such as IP address, browser type and site usage (for example: what pages are accessed, how much time was spent on each page, etc...).

Community Features

As you use Gamestar Mechanic, you will have the option to participate in an online community with other users. Community features include

- Sharing games you have created with other users
- Sharing an online profile with other users
- Posting comments, reviews or ratings for your games or games shared by other users

All of these activities are optional, and our goal is to make them part of the safe, fun and educational Gamestar Mechanic experience. Your participation in these activities – as with all of Gamestar Mechanic – is governed by the Rules of Conduct, which describe the acceptable ways to use Gamestar.

We do not retain any personal information from you in the course of your using the Community Features. In fact, Gamestar's Terms of Service and Rules of Conduct specifically prohibit users from sharing personal information through Community Features. We make every effort to enforce these rules through electronic tools, selective monitoring by our staff and investigating reports from our community members. You should understand, however, that any information you choose to share through Community Features may be accessible by anyone who uses Gamestar.

Sharing Features

In certain parts of the Gamestar, you may have the option of sharing something you've created or like using an "Invite a Friend" feature. In this case, you will be asked to submit your name and email address, as well as your friend's name and email address. This information will be used only to send the message you requested, and will not be stored or maintained by us.

Social Media and Networking Features

In certain parts of Gamestar, you may have the option of sharing something you've created or like to a third-party social media or networking site such as Facebook or Twitter. We do not expose or allow access to these features to children under the age of 13 and, by default, these features are also disabled if your account is member of a school or institution (unless you are over 13 and your school or institution's administrator has enabled them). If you are over 13 and are not a member of any school or institution, you may also enable or disable access to social media and networking features for your account using the 'Manage Account' feature.

Your usage of these features is strictly voluntary. If you elect to use these features, you should be aware that your use of them is subject to the terms of service and privacy policies of the third-party social media or networking site, which may be different from those of Gamestar. In most cases, your use of such features will require that you log in to or authenticate with the third-party site.

Generally, we do not ask for or collect any personal information from you in order to use third-party social media or networking features. If, for any reason, the usage of a third party social media or networking feature requires that you provide personal information to us or would result in us having access to your personal information, you will be explicitly asked for permission (either by Gamestar, the third-party site or both) and given the opportunity to decline to provide the information and not use the feature.

Paid Subscribers

We require users subscribing to the Premium version Gamestar Mechanic to provide us with the information we need to process their payments such as name, address, telephone number and information about the method of payment. We securely store this information in our system for the purposes of automating future payments and providing customer service if authorized by the individual making the purchase ("Purchaser"). This information pertains to the Purchaser, who must be eighteen or older and who may or may not be the actual user of Gamestar Mechanic. Specific terms of use related to users of the Premium version of Gamestar Mechanic are described in the Subscriber Agreement.

Cookies

In common with many websites, Gamestar places small files known as "cookies" on our users' machines. Cookies allow Gamestar to provide a convenient experience for our users by keeping track of user identities as they navigate to different parts of the Gamestar website.

For the best user experience, we recommend that you configure your web browser to accept cookies from Gamestar Mechanic. It is possible to configure your web browser not to accept cookies, but this may cause some features of Gamestar not to work properly.

How we use this information

We use the information we collect to enable Gamestar features; respond to your requests and provide customer service; let you know about new features and other news from Gamestar; ask for your input and feedback on what we are doing; and provide personalized services and recommendations.

If you have provided us with an email address, we may contact you via email to share information that we think will be of interest to you such as new features, product updates and contests. If you would prefer not to receive these updates, you may opt out of them at any time by changing the notification settings on your account settings page. Each of these emails also contains instructions for how to opt out. However, even if you opt out of these notices, you will still receive email from us related specifically to your use of Gamestar: for example in response to a customer service request.

We also use your personally identifiable information and certain non-personally identifiable Gamestar website usage data to improve the quality and design of Gamestar and its website and to create new features, promotions, and services by storing, tracking, and analyzing user preferences and trends.

Third parties

As part of our regular business conduct, we may securely share information with third-party companies or individuals providing services or acting on our behalf, such as companies providing payment processing, technological or fulfillment services.

Outside of these specific circumstances, we never share your personally identifiable information with third parties for any purpose. This includes not sharing your personal information with third parties for commercial or marketing purposes.

Occasionally, we may share non-personally identifiable data with third parties such as sponsors or academic researchers who are conducting research involving Gamestar Mechanic. In these circumstances, we only share data in ways that do not result in the third parties obtaining our users' personal information.

How to contact us

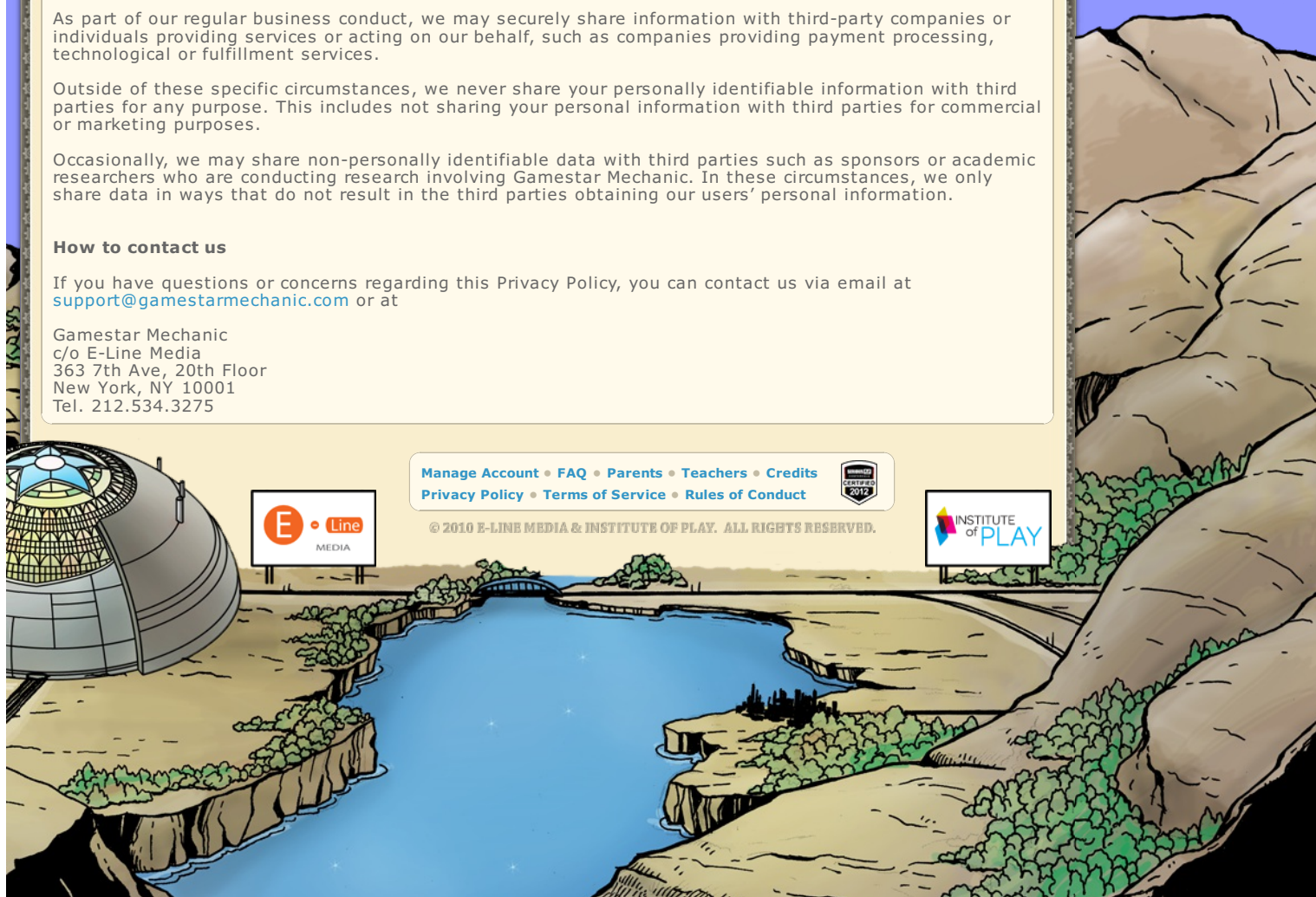
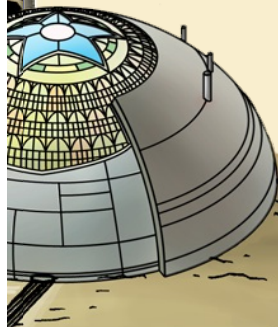
If you have questions or concerns regarding this Privacy Policy, you can contact us via email at support@gamestarmechanic.com or at

Gamestar Mechanic
c/o E-Line Media
363 7th Ave, 20th Floor
New York, NY 10001
Tel. 212.534.3275

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Tech and Video Game Use Survey

To help your teachers prepare for your final unit in 7th grade English, please answer these questions about your use of video games and technology. Feel free to ask a parent or guardian for help answering these questions if you need it.

*** Required**

What technology do you have available to you at home? *

Choose as many as apply.

- ☐ Smartphone
- ☐ Cell phone (not a smartphone)
- ☐ MP3 player
- ☐ Video game console (Wii, PS3, PSP, Xbox, etc)
- ☐ Tablet (iPad, etc)
- ☐ Laptop computer
- ☐ Desktop computer
- ☐ Wireless internet connection
- ☐ Wired internet connect

Do you have daily access to a computer with internet access? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

How do you use technology? *

Choose all that apply.

- ☐ To video chat (through Skype, FaceTime, etc)
- ☐ To play games
- ☐ To do homework
- ☐ To do research
- ☐ To learn more about a hobby
- ☐ To read e-books
- ☐ To use social networking sites (like Facebook)
- ☐ To send email
- ☐ To send text messages

How would you describe your use of video games? *

- ☐ Casual (Play games on phone, computer or console at least once a week)
- ☐ I don't play video games
- ☐ Extensive (Play video games daily on multiple platforms)
- ☐ Minimal (Play games a few times a month or less)

Have you ever designed your own video game? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

What challenges might you face if you were asked to use the computer for homework daily? *

Submit

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Lesson Plan #1 for Gamestar Mechanic

Lesson: Video Games as Literature

Teachers: Ms. Shanahan and Ms. Hamm

Course: 7th grade English

Duration: 45 minutes

Learning Objectives

- Students will analyze video games for narrative elements including mood, characterization, setting, conflict, resolution, cause-effect, point of view, pacing, and visual transitions.
 - Students will identify the tools game designers use to tell stories (backgrounds, cutscenes, music, characters, level descriptions, intro screens, outro screens).
 - Students will compare and contrast video game narratives to print narratives.
-

Lesson Design

Preparation:

In preparation for the unit, teacher will select clips and/or screenshots from video games that demonstrate narrative principles. The games used for this unit may vary, but all should have a compelling, high-interest story line that illustrates the narrative concepts for the lesson. All graphic organizers and materials for the unit will be prepared and copied in advance.

Prior Knowledge:

Students have analyzed fiction for character, setting, mood, theme, etc. and have demonstrated levels of proficiency (basic through mastery) in applying these concepts to short stories and drama throughout the earlier part of this unit. In the final project for this unit, students will be asked to brainstorm, plan, write, and design an interactive narrative in the form of a video game. This lesson will prepare students for their final project by challenging them to apply their knowledge of storytelling concepts to video games. Prior to the beginning of this unit, students completed a tech and video game use survey to assess prior experience with topics related to gaming. Following this lesson, students will discover the principles of video game design and learn the basics of Gamestar Mechanic, the tool they will use to design their final projects.

Lesson sequence:

Warm Up (3-5 minutes): Ask students to write a short list of similarities between video games and short stories. Teacher will check-in one-on-one with students about last night's survey during this time if needed. Teacher will also assist students who are having difficulty brainstorming by prompting with questions to guide responses. At the end of the warm up, class will review briefly by sharing answers.

Transition (3-5 minutes): Teacher will point out that video games share many of the narrative features of stories, including mood, characterization, setting, conflict, resolution, cause-effect,

point of view, pacing, and visual transitions, and will introduce the classwork for the day by going over the agenda on the class whiteboard.

Guided Practice (30 minutes): Teacher will list literary terms definitions on the smartboard, and class will review briefly. Next, teacher will provide a copy of graphic organizer and explain the organizer. Class will record analyses on the organizer. Then, the class will view selected narrative clips from a video game (for the initial pilot, we will view the intro and selected story scenes from *Zelda, Link to the Past*). Teacher will read all written text on the screen. Class will analyze game based on prior knowledge of narrative technique. Teacher will point out techniques unique to video game design, such as cut scenes, use of color, music, etc.

Closure (5 minutes): Teacher will explain independent practice, and will make initial connections for students about using literary elements in their Gamestar stories

Independent Practice: Students will analyze an additional video game for homework using the same graphic organizer from class (*New Super Mario Brothers Wii*)

Assessment: Students will go over their review in class and, after revising their answers during class discussion, will submit them for teacher review.

Materials:

1. Video game clips or screenshots
2. Graphic organizer for analysis

Video Game Suggestions:

- *Zelda, Link to the Past*
- *New Super Mario Brothers Wii*
- *Myst, Riven, and Myst 3 exile*

Name: _____

Date: _____

Video Game Analysis

Directions: In the boxes below, describe the storytelling elements of a video game. In the first box, describe what the element is like in the game. (Ex, Mood = spooky, gloomy, and dank.) In the second box, describe the techniques used to create the element. (Ex. Mood= created by the colors and music used). You do not need to use complete sentences, but you should write detailed information and use vivid vocabulary in each box.

Storytelling element	Description	Techniques used
Mood		
Character		
Setting		
Conflict		
Resolution		
Point of view		
Pacing		

Lesson Plan #2 for Gamestar Mechanic – Basic Terms & Concepts

Learning Objectives

- Students will play and analyze Gamestar Mechanic for the basic elements behind game design.
 - Students will identify terms and concepts used in the games through a matching card game.
-

Lesson Design

Preparation:

In preparation for this lesson, the librarian will register all students in the premium version of Gamestar Mechanic. Logins will be provided to students during this first class on gaming. The librarian will reserve the school's computer lab for the same time slot for the duration of the unit. All element cards and materials for the lesson will be prepared and copied in advance.

Prior Knowledge:

Students will have reviewed narrative elements with their teacher in a prior lesson. The teacher will also have introduced how other games that students have played utilize narrative elements in their design.

Lesson sequence:

Set Up (3-5 minutes): Hand out login information to all students. Ask all students to log on to the school network and open an Internet browser. Students will be reminded of the school's Internet policies and be reminded that they should only be on the Gamestar Mechanic site for this class period. There will be no free time on the computer. Have each student log in to their student account. Students will be introduced to the basics of Gamestar; such as students will need to complete quests i.e. play the game in order to earn sprites, the components of a game.

Guided Practice (20 minutes): Students will play episodes one and two of the first Gamestar quest. The teacher and librarian will go around the room and help students who are having difficulty. If it is needed, students can be paired together to help each other accomplish the episodes. If students do not complete the first two episodes, they will be asked to complete them for homework. If students finish the first two episodes early, they may continue to work on the rest of the first quest in Gamestar Mechanic.

Review (10-15 minutes): Teacher will hand out Element Cards to students. Students will be asked to match the images on the cards to the correct terms. This will be a game, and the first student to complete the matching game correctly will win a bookmark.

Closure (5-10 minutes): The librarian will lead a discussion with the students about the terms and concepts that they learned while playing episodes one and two of the first quest. The librarian will lead a guided discussion about the terms and concepts. Do students understand all of the terms and concepts? Did the students enjoy playing the episodes in the first quest?

Independent Practice: Students will complete the first quest of Gamestar Mechanic as homework.

Assessment: The teacher will verify students' completion of the first quest in Gamestar Mechanic.

Materials:

1. Computer Lab
2. Gamestar Mechanic Credentials
3. Element Card Game
4. Element Cards Answer Key

Adapted from Gamestar Mechanic Learning Guide -
<https://sites.google.com/a/elinemedia.com/gsmlearningguide/game-design-101/lesson-1-terms-and-concepts>



Challenge Cards

Corresponds to Lesson 4



Challenge Card Introduction

The following cards correspond to the activity in Lesson 4. They can be printed **single-sided**, the covers for the cards are optional.

These cards provide four challenges that students can refer to when making a game.

For more challenge cards, visit Challenge Cards at:
<http://learningguide.gamestarmechanic.com>.



Do Not Pass!

Create a game with barriers and obstacles that you have to get by in order to win (or move to the next level).

Creating puzzles for your player to solve is a powerful way to control progress through a game. Creating complex enemy movement patterns can create obstacles too.



Gamestar Challenge



Home

Create a game about your neighborhood. Spaces in the real world can be great inspiration for games.

Think about who lives in your neighborhood and how you would represent them in a game. Ask "what is unique about my neighborhood?" Think about what people like to do there, how they move around, and the places you like to go.



Gamestar Challenge



Sunrise to Sunset

Create a game that starts in the morning and ends at night.

Changes in the day can be expressed through a change in mechanic (do you do different things in the morning than at night?), the use of backgrounds, music, or a sequence of levels.



Gamestar Challenge



Amazing Race

Create a game about an amazing race.





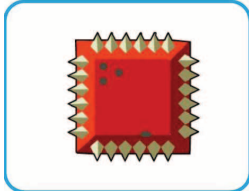

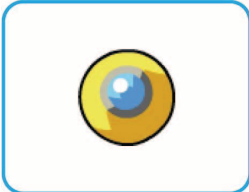

Timers create pressure and mark the beginning and end of a race. Design a racecourse with a challenging space (long, narrow, or full of obstacles). Think about making shortcuts and detours to give racers some choice in where they go.



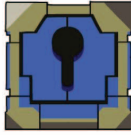




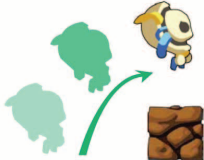

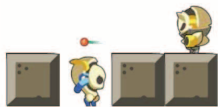
Gamestar Challenge






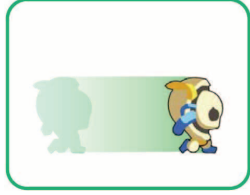
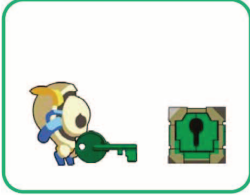
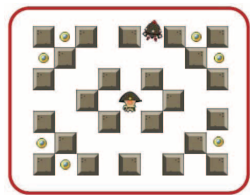
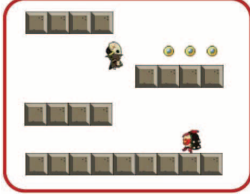
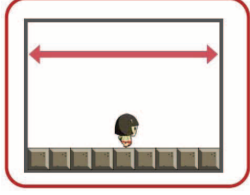


NAME	DESCRIPTION	CARD TYPE	IMAGE
Avatar	The digital representation of a physical person in a virtual world or game.	Component Card	
Enemy	An armed, opposing character that deals damage and has a variety of attack and movement patterns.	Component Card	
Boss	Particularly large, strong or difficult armed, opposing character.	Component Card	
Environment Block	A block that is used as a surface or a wall.	Component Card	
Damage Block	A block that hurts avatars on contact and is used as a harmful surface or wall.	Component Card	
Goal Block	When an active Goal Block is touched the game is won. In some games, however, the avatar sprite must meet conditions before the Goal Block is activated.	Component Card	
Point	A small item the Avatar can collect to meet the win conditions of a game or improve their score.	Component Card	
Key	A key that can open locks of the same color.	Component Card	



NAME	DESCRIPTION	CARD TYPE	IMAGE
Lock	A lock that can only be opened by keys of the same color.	Component Card	
Timer	Counts seconds during gameplay. The player either needs to win before the time runs out or survive for a certain amount of time.	Component Card	
Frag Counter	Counts the number of destroyed enemies and can be used as a goal.	Component Card	
Score Keeper	Counts the number of points collected and can be used as a goal.	Component Card	
Health Meter	Controls Avatar health. The game is lost when health reaches zero.	Component Card	
Jumping Mechanic	Avatars can jump onto blocks and over enemies.	Mechanic Card	
Blasting Mechanic	Avatars can blast enemies.	Mechanic Card	
Avoiding Mechanic	Avatars can hide and avoid enemies in parts of the game space.	Mechanic Card	



NAME	DESCRIPTION	CARD TYPE	IMAGE
Collecting Mechanic	Avatars collect or pick up points or other environmental items.	Mechanic Card	
Exploring Mechanic	Avatars explore the environment usually in a maze or a big, scrolling space.	Mechanic Card	
Walking Mechanic	Avatars have a slower speed.	Mechanic Card	
Racing Mechanic	Avatars have a very fast speed, and may seem to be racing against enemies.	Mechanic Card	
Solving Mechanic	Players must solve puzzles in the game, such as finding the correct path or bringing the correct key to a lock.	Mechanic Card	
Top-down Perspective	The game is presented in an overhead view, or bird's eye view, as if the player was seeing the game from above.	Space Card	
Platformer Perspective	The view of the game is from the side. Here, the player can see sprites jumping.	Space Card	
Bounded Space	The game space is closed on the sides so the sprites cannot leave or fall out of the screen.	Space Card	



NAME	DESCRIPTION	CARD TYPE	IMAGE
Unbounded Space	The game space is open so that sprites can leave or fall out of the screen.	Space Card	
Wraparound Space	The game space wraps around so that when sprites exit off one side of the screen, they appear on the opposite side.	Space Card	
Scrolling Space	There are multiples screens in this game space so an Avatar can move horizontally or vertically through different environments.	Space Card	

Lesson Plan #3 for Gamestar Mechanic - Design

Learning Objectives

- Students will apply their knowledge of game design elements and concepts.
 - Students will create their first game in Gamestar Mechanic.
 - Students prepare for their final project.
-

Lesson Design

Preparation:

The librarian will reserve the computer lab for this lesson. The teacher will verify that all students have completed their quests in Gamestar Mechanic. Students will be assigned to groups of 3-4 based on their responses to the Tech survey they took at the beginning of this unit. Students with lower levels of experience with technology will be paired in groups with students who have higher levels of experience. All challenge cards and materials for the lesson will be prepared and copied in advance.

Prior Knowledge:

Students will have been introduced to the basics of game design through playing all five quests in Gamestar Mechanic. The teacher and librarian will have reviewed the concepts behind the five quests and their relation to game design and how the students can utilize them to create a story using the storytelling techniques covered in the video games as literature lessons.

Lesson sequence:

Set Up (5 minutes): Students will be broken out into their pre-assigned groups. Each group will be given a challenge card as their game design assignment. This will be their introduction to game design before students begin planning their final project.

Guided Practice (40 minutes): Students will design their practice games in groups based on the challenge card assigned to them.

Independent Practice: Groups will complete their practice games for homework.

Assessment: Each group will play another group's game and rate their success. The teacher and librarian will play all of the games and give students feedback. They will lead a class discussion about the strengths and weaknesses seen in the game. Students will brainstorm ideas how to fix

weaknesses and the teacher and/or librarian will write these ideas down and present them as a handout for the students with the final project assignment.

Materials:

1. Computer Lab
2. Challenge Cards

Adapted from Gamestar Mechanic Learning Guide -
<https://sites.google.com/a/elinemedia.com/gsmlearningguide/game-design-101/lesson-4-design>

Gamestar Storyboard	Name		Title	
	Class		Date	

Level 1:

Level 2:

Level: 3

Level 4:

Level 5:

Level 6:

Gamestar Storyboard	Name		Title	
	Class		Date	

Level 1

Goals

.....

Description

Gamestar Storyboard	Name		Title	
	Class		Date	

Level 2

Goals

Description

Gamestar Storyboard	Name		Title	
	Class		Date	

Level 3

Goals

.....

Description



Playtester Feedback Worksheet

Student Worksheet



Playtester Name:



Name of Game playtested:

Feedback Questions:

1. What was the concept of the game? Was it clear? Why?

2. What were the core mechanics of the game? Did they fit well with the concept? Why?

3. How did the game space make you feel?

4. Are the five elements of game design balanced in this game? How?

5. What was challenging about the game?

6. What was fun about the game?

7. How could this game be improved?

*** 1. Did you like using Gamestar Mechanic?**

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

*** 2. Were you able to successfully tell your story using Gamestar?**

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Why or Why Not?

*** 3. Please rate the following on a scale of 1 - 5. (1 - being really easy and 5 - being really hard)**

	1	2	3	4	5
To Learn Gamestar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To Use Gamestar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quest Level 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quest Level 2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quest Level 3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quest Level 4	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quest Level 5	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Done

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Citations

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